



Volume 74

September 2008

Issue 7

The Prez Sez

In spite of the last Prez Sez as being the last one I get an encore performance this time.

I would like to thank all the members of LARC who helped out in the few years. Whether you were in the repeater fix it group, helped with ARES, worked at a public service event, served on the executive or just came out to meetings on a regular basis. I have to say a special thanks to Ed, VE3SNW who is the editor of Hi-Q. If you are trying something new in radio, why not consider typing up a small article for him. It's people like you who are the backbone of the Lakehead Amateur Radio Club. Thanks.

But like all backbones with time it starts to bend under the load and could use some help from a new and much younger one. It does not matter how long you have been a member of the club, we just need your enthusiasm to help the cause.

The typical response is I don't have the time. I spend on average one hour a month planning the LARC meetings. This includes getting a guest speaker or some other activity for the meeting. The meeting itself takes 2 hours a month. Any one of us can spare that time. Once or twice a year we have an executive meeting that will take another hour.

So why not give some thought as to letting your name stand for an executive position with the LARC.

73

Bill VE3XT

LARC MEETING - SEPTEMBER 11TH, 2008

191 McIntyre Building, Confederation College, 7:30 PM

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

CLUB DUES ARE DUE

LARC SENATE

Keith Fiske VE3JQ
Pat Doherty VE3PD
Dave Kimpton VE3AVS
Laurie Bridgett VE3BCD
Terry Stewardson VA3LU
Ed Baumann VE3SNW

LARC EXECUTIVE

President
Bill Unger VE3XT 344-1848
Vice-President
Bob Hansen VE3RVA 767-6924
Secretary
Terry Stewardson VA3LU 577-9439
Treasurer
Joe Coghlan VE3TBX 344-6566
Directors
Brad Harris VE3MXJ 767-0628
Randy Gottfred VA3OJ 474-0910
Mike Nawrocki VE3ZG 767-1714
Brian Bolt VE3BCQ
Past President
Terry Stewardson VA3LU 577-9439

LARC Emergency Coordinator
VA3OJ Randy Gottfred 474-0910
ARES District Emergency
Coordinator
VE3FAL Fred Lesnick 577-0789
Assistant
VE3MXJ Brad 767-0628
CANWARN
VA3JMS John 767-3631
VE3MXJ Brad 767-0628
Public Service Events
VE3MXJ Brad 767-0628
VA3JMS John 767-3631
Amateur Radio
Accredited Examiner
VE3FAL Fred Lesnick 577-0789
lesnick@tbaytel.net

ABOUT US

The Lakehead Amateur Radio Club (LARC) is an incorporated not for profit group of amateur radio operators in the Thunder Bay area that meet for self education, community service and fellowship. Our meetings are the second Thursday of the month at room 191 McIntyre Building, Confederation College, 7:30 PM. Our postal address is 1100C Memorial Ave. Suite 184, Thunder Bay, Ontario P7B 4A3. This newsletter is published monthly except for July and August by Ed Baumann VE3SNW and questions and submissions may be emailed to ve3snw@shaw.ca

Lakehead Amateur Radio Club - Treasurer's Report

Balance on Hand - June 10/08 \$6,299.39

Income

Memberships	\$70.00
50/50 Draws	\$4.00
Bank Interest	\$0.10
Total Income	\$74.10

Expenses

Thunder Bay Telephone	\$95.22
Mail Box Rental	\$131.20
Hymers Fair Expenses	\$156.33
Bank Service Charges	\$2.50
Field Day Expenses	\$200.46
Total Expenses	\$585.71

Balance on Hand - Sept. 4/08 \$5,787.78

Joe Coghlan - VE3 TBX
Treasurer

LARC OPEN ACCESS REPEATERS

VE3YQT(Mount Baldy)147.060 (-600) Phone Patch

**VE3TBR (St. Joseph's) 145.490 (-600) (100.0 Hz)
442.075 (+5 MHz)
144.390 APRS**

**VE3BGA (Hillcrest H.S.) 145.450 (-600) (IRLP Node VA3LU 123.0 Hz)
442.825 (+5 MHz) (100.0 Hz)**

VE3UPP Upsala 145.470 (-600)

FROM RAC

North East Regional Directors Report September 2008

First let me apologize for not sending out a Directors report for a while now. For the month of July I was in China for the College. I did maintain continuity with RAC via email, but I let the report slide.

The monthly meeting of the Regional Directors was held on August 26 starting at 2330Z. Most of the items discussed were of a house keeping variety and things seem to rolling along fine. Now that the Norman case is settled we can move on a more stable note.

There was an issue very recently regarding the use of aliases at the RAC web reflector. You may want to have some one send you an email to ve3xxx@rac.ca to make sure it still works for you.

We also have a new VP of Public Relations, Peter West, VE3HG. You can check out his qualifications at http://www.rac.ca/service/executive_e.php

Just before I left for holidays there was some news about Dalton McGuinty musing about changes to the Highway Traffic Act affecting the operation of "electronic devices" in a vehicle. No one is sure exactly where he is going with this but I think we should get ourselves on the radar and ensure that he knows what a valuable resource we are as mobile radio operators. I have enclosed a sample letter that I am sending to him. If you want to send one like this or your own I would encourage you to do so. Please just modify if to suit the situation. If you chose snail mail that's ok or an email would do just fine. His email is dmcguinty.mpp.co@liberal.ola.org

I will endeavour to send out one of these news letters shortly after the RAC Teleconference on a monthly basis.

If you have any questions or concerns please email me at ve3xt@rac.ca.

73

Bill VE3XT
North East Ontario
Regional Director

CANWARN CORNER

Another quite storm season, a few quick systems blew through the area. We had a few warnings which happened later in the evening so the net wasn't activated. Thanks to all of our club members for attending the yearly Canwarn training.

John Sacek (VA3JMS)
Canwarn Coordinator

A Repeater is Born...

A report on the W0BBN Repeater System by Randy VA3OJ, June 30 2008

W0BBN has spread out its coverage of Northern Minnesota and now extends into the Thunder Bay area.

On a warm sunny day, the climbing crew assembled at the Portage site to install a 4 bay vertical and 11-element yagi and heliax. The 4 bay handles all the vhf side and the yagi handles all the uhf linking duties. KB0BDN Rick and VA3OJ Randy handle the climbing duties and N0WSI Pat, N0ACP Terry, KC0YBN Isaac take care of the groundwork. Most of the gear is brought up on a quad runner and trailer to the site. The trail is rough and a good hike by foot.

Once the entire crew is briefed on what is to be done, the climb begins with Randy taking the lead with Rick to follow. When we reach the mounting height of +/- 200 ft, we secure to the tower and wait for the ground crew to get the antenna to us. Wind is picking up and the pull is slowed by the twisting of the lift line that is 400+ ft long. The quad is called into duty to pull the antenna into position. The antenna is attached to the tower and then the heliax is pulled into position and terminated at the antenna and weatherproofed. Then as we descend, the heliax is strapped to the tower. There is a lot of activity occurring, on the tower and on the ground. This particular part of the installation starts at about 11:30 am and is complete by 5pm. If you have never done tower work before, you can imagine the energy that is used and the fatigue that sets in by spending a lot of time standing on the tower rungs. The physical pulling, pushing and wind blowing on you really drains your energy. Mind you, when you stop to take a short break, the view is breathtaking.

Rick slowly descends to the 60 ft level while strapping the helix to the tower and Randy follows him down. A decision is made to complete the installation before dark. Rick heads to the ground and helps the ground crew to preassemble all hookups for the yagi and second run of heliax. As the sun sinks in the west, the yagi is installed and pointed at the Maple Hill site for the uhf link to be established. The final connections are made on the tower and both pieces of

heliax are strapped down on the tower. The time is close to 8 PM when Randy very happily makes it back to Mother Earth.

During the time of the yagi hookup, Rick, Pat and Terry are working on getting the cables into the building and completing the rest of the hookup to the repeater. So far the gremlins have stayed away. BUT on the final connection of the heliax to the patch cord from the repeater, they pay a visit. The heliax connector has come loose and needs to be reattached. Rounding up the tools, the repair is made and Rick wants to see if there is any smoke to be let out. A quick check of all the connections again and power surges through the unit bringing it to life. It is now 10 PM and it is getting dark enough for the tower lights to come on. The first call goes out and Jayne N0UYQ answers with a good report.

Rick is grinning ear to ear. He has put a lot of time and effort and funds into seeing this project through., the story ends with everyone heading down to the mobiles to head home. It is about 11:30 pm at the site. Tired is a good way to describe the faces but don't be fooled by the image you see. There are some awfully excited hams here. We have done what others have tried to do. We have bridged the border and connected the United States with Canada on the west shore of Lake Superior with a good communication link. One last round of handshakes and pats on the back and we start to head home wherever that might be.

I have the chance to try this new link from the site to Thunder Bay on the ride home. I cross the border and can still hear the repeater down in the hole at border area. All along Hwy 61, the reception is good except a couple of areas where the NorWesters get close to the hwy and it was a little scratchy but readable. I pull into my back yard and the repeater is still working well and a quick call finds Pat at his QTH and we say our goodbyes.

Still running the adrenalin rush, I go to the shack and turn on the vhf radio to check the signal to find a 60+ db with the beam on the tower and s7 on the mobile hooked to the discone antenna, not too bad at all!!!

Rick is still making his way home as the clock aA

Repeater is Born... approaches 2 am. With him a few miles from safely being home, I sign off and get some much-needed rest.

Over the next few days, tests are preformed around Thunder Bay with fair to excellent results.

Many of the reports show good coverage to base set ups and mobile works well in open and higher elevations around Thunder Bay. It can be triggered north of the city to about Trout Lake but it is noisy. Further tests are being done as time permits, but good coverage to the south can be expected. The site is approximately 33 miles from the south side of the city and 44 miles from the north end of the city.

For those interested, I would appreciate any and all radio reports from your travels on the coverage of the repeater and anything that might be of interest to Rick regarding its performance. You can find the Portage repeater located at **146.655 MHz with a pl of 151.4**.

Give it a try and introduce yourself to the Boundary Waters Amateur Radio Club folks from Northern Minnesota. You will be glad you did.

Thanks to KB0BDN Rick for his hard work and for letting me be part of this project. Many thanks to the rest of the crew - Pat, Terry and Isaac for their fine work and help at keeping us safe while we worked overhead. And special thanks to the loved ones at home that let us do what we do even when they don't understand why we do what we do.

Emergency frequency list
<http://www.mmsn.org/emergencyfreqs.html>
courtesy of KB8XI

Every Tuesday Evening is the L.A.R.C. 2M/A.R.E.S. net on 147.060- YQT @ 7:00pm

also every Sun. & Wed. evening @ 8:00pm is the ONTARIO ARES IRLP NET on IRLP ref.9005.

In case you are in the area...

Hamfest India 2008,

The official Hamfest of Indian amateurs will be held in Gandhinagar, Gujarat on the 11th and 12th of October 2008.

Full details are available on <http://www.hfi2008.com/>

WANTED

Amateur Radio Operators to stand for election for officers of the Lakehead Amateur Radio Club. The upcoming year will be the 75th anniversary of the club. **This is the year that the LARC needs YOUR help.** Are you up to the challenge?

What's Wrong with the Sun? (Nothing)

July 11, 2008: Stop the presses! The sun is behaving normally.

So says NASA solar physicist David Hathaway. "There have been some reports lately that Solar Minimum is lasting longer than it should. That's not true. The ongoing lull in sunspot number is well within historic norms for the solar cycle."

This report, that there's nothing to report, is newsworthy because of a growing buzz in lay and academic circles that something is wrong with the sun. Sun Goes Longer Than Normal Without Producing Sunspots declared one recent press release. A careful look at the data, however, suggests otherwise.

But first, a status report: "The sun is now near the low point of its 11-year activity cycle," says Hathaway. "We call this 'Solar Minimum.' It is the period of quiet that separates one Solar Max from another."

During Solar Max, huge sunspots and intense solar flares are a daily occurrence. Auroras appear in Florida. Radiation storms knock out satellites. Radio blackouts frustrate hams. The last such episode took place in the years around 2000-2001.

During Solar Minimum, the opposite occurs. Solar flares are almost nonexistent while whole weeks go by

without a single, tiny sunspot to break the monotony of the blank sun. This is what we are experiencing now.

Although minima are a normal aspect of the solar cycle, some observers are questioning the length of the ongoing minimum, now slogging through its 3rd year.

"It does seem like it's taking a long time," allows Hathaway, "but I think we're just forgetting how long a solar minimum can last." In the early 20th century there were periods of quiet lasting almost twice as long as the current spell. (See the end notes for an example.) Most researchers weren't even born then.

Hathaway has studied international sunspot counts stretching all the way back to 1749 and he offers these statistics: "The average period of a solar cycle is 131 months with a standard deviation of 14 months. Decaying solar cycle 23 (the one we are experiencing now) has so far lasted 142 months--well within the first standard deviation and thus not at all abnormal. The last available 13-month smoothed sunspot number was 5.70. This is bigger than 12 of the last 23 solar minimum values."

In summary, "the current minimum is not abnormally low or long."

The longest minimum on record, the Maunder Minimum of 1645-1715, lasted an incredible 70 years. Sunspots were rarely observed and the solar cycle seemed to have broken down completely. The period of quiet coincided with the Little Ice Age, a series of extraordinarily bitter winters in Earth's northern hemisphere. Many researchers are convinced that low solar activity, acting in concert with increased volcanism and possible changes in ocean current patterns, played a role in that 17th century cooling.

For reasons no one understands, the sunspot cycle revived itself in the early 18th century and has carried on since with the familiar 11-year period. Because solar physicists do not understand what triggered the Maunder Minimum or exactly how it influenced Earth's climate, they are always on the look-out for signs that it might be happening again.

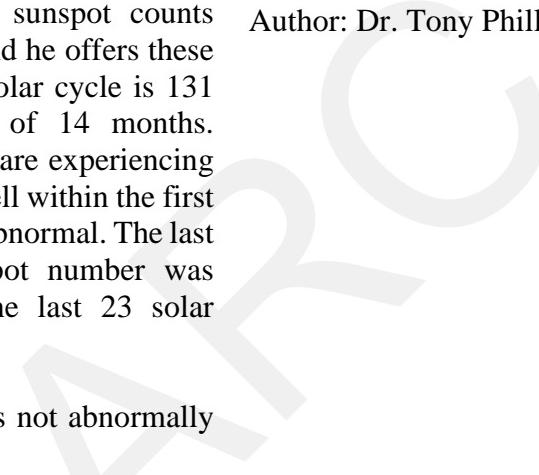
The quiet of 2008 is not the second coming of the Maunder Minimum, believes Hathaway. "We have already observed a few sunspots from the next solar cycle," he says. (See Solar Cycle 24 Begins.) "This suggests the solar cycle is progressing normally."

What's next? Hathaway anticipates more spotless days, maybe even hundreds, followed by a return to Solar Max conditions in the years around 2012.

Stay tuned to Science@NASA for updates.

SEND THIS STORY TO A FRIEND

Author: Dr. Tony Phillips | Credit: Science@NASA



September 2008

Mon	Tue 2 meter ARES net 7 PM on YQT	Wed Ontario ARES Net IRLP reflector 9005 at 8 pm	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun Ontario ARES Net IRLP reflector 9005 at 8 pm
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11 <i>LARC meeting</i>	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30		Thursdays at 2100 - coffee with the geek crew at Boston (Arthur St)			NWO ARES NET 8:15 pm on 3.750 mhz.